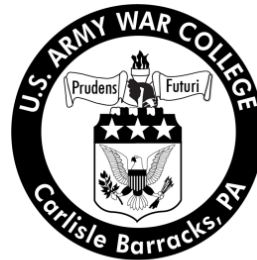# Property Accountability – Getting Back to the Basics!

by

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United States Army

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PROPERTY ACCOUNTABILITY – GETTING BACK TO THE BASICS!

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ABSTRACT

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During the past decade, the Army has found itself in a period of conflict that has seen a dramatic increase in equipment procurement at all levels. As a result, the accountability for and actual use of some of this newly acquired equipment has become a concern. Army units have massive amounts of equipment to account for, but some evidence indicates that commanders lack sufficient visibility to account for their assigned equipment. Poor accounting has led to both excess and losses of equipment. This strategy research paper analyzes current problems in accountability for Army equipment. It inquires into changes in Army culture that may have adversely affected leadership, learning and training during the past decade of persistent conflict and military operations. It explores gaps in leadership and doctrine and issues with policy and regulations that have weakened accountability practices. It concludes with recommendations for better practices in the Army's accountability for its enormous holdings of equipment.

PROPERTY ACCOUNTABILITY – GETTING BACK TO THE BASICS!

> …concur with a "getting back to the basics campaign", but one of the
> challenges in getting back to the basics is that 50% or better of our
> formation does not know what you mean when you say we need to get
> back to the basics, because they have never been there!

> —Lt. Gen. Donald M. Campbell
> III Corps & Fort Hood Commander[1]

During the past decade, the Army has found itself in state of persistent conflict in several operational areas during a turbulent period of Army Transformation. Conflicts and transformation have precipitated a dramatic increase in equipment procurement and turn-in at every level. Commanders have focused their attention mostly on operational missions; they have paid little attention to their responsibilities in the administrative or property accountability areas. Rather, they have concentrated on their units' readiness to deploy and to conduct operations. Moreover, the Army Force Generation (ARFORGEN) model has added a level of command complexity as units move through the deployment cycle.[2] As a result, the visibility, accountability, and in some cases that actual use of equipment within the Army's inventories has become a concern. Unit commanders have massive amounts of equipment to account for, and some evidence indicates that commanders are not doing the basics when it comes to properly accounting for their assigned equipment.[3] Poor accounting has led to both excess and losses of equipment. Our Army is only as good as its equipment and the Soldiers who use, maintain, and account for Army property. Strategically, the Army must ensure that adequate processes, procedures, education, and leadership keep Army equipment in the best condition possible and to account for it. Only then can

Army equipment serve its intended purpose of giving our Soldiers the greatest possible advantage in winning our nation's wars as we promote and seek peace.

This research paper examines the Army's confirmed and growing problem of a lack of visibility and accountability of equipment in both garrison and forward deployed locations.[4] It describes the conditions that have altered the Army's culture in terms of leadership, training, learning, and experience during this recent period of persistent conflict. It demonstrates how lacking leadership, cultural change and gaps in doctrine relating to policy and regulations that have allowed accountability practices to slip. It concludes with recommendations for better practices in the Army's accountability for its enormous holdings of equipment.

Background

Soon after the United States invaded Iraq in early 2003, forward-deployed Army headquarters requested implementation of wartime accountability procedures. In May 2003, Headquarters Department of the Army issued a message authorizing implementation of wartime accountability procedures at the component commanders' discretion.[5] Specifically, the message directed that,

> written delegation of authority for supplies was not required (para 3.A(3)), component shortages are not required to be documented (3.B(1)), documentation of shortages and assigning responsibility to the user are not required (3.D), inspections and inventories cease… inventories are only required to assess on-hand balances and condition… these inventories need not be documented (3.H).[6]

This message clearly gave commanders and supply sergeants the latitude and leeway to ignore their stewardship roles and responsibilities. But Army leaders' initiative to establish policy on property accountability during the initial stages of the war was clearly the right thing to do − We were at war! But the way the policy was implemented

has led the Army into a situation that has literally allowed mountains of excess property to pile up. In this wartime environment, visibility and accountability of Army equipment was not a priority for Army commanders.[7]

In November 2005, after two-and-a-half years of wartime accountability procedures, the Army realized that while fighting a war on multiple fronts and executing transformation and restationing actions, it was beginning to have a problem with equipment visibility and property accountability. And this problem would ultimately affect readiness. Property that was no longer needed was piling up in unit areas; personnel rotations and the wartime accountability policy eliminated the need to maintain accurate records.[8] Therefore, no one was assigned specific responsibility for excess Army equipment in this murky environment. Acknowledging this shortfall across the Army and its potential impact on readiness, an All Army Action (ALARACT) message was then issued rescinding the wartime accountability policy.[9] The ALARACT directed commanders to gain visibility and accountability of their equipment within 90 days of the date of the message in both garrison and deployed environments. This reinstatement of property accountability came just as the Army was in the beginning stages of its transformation and modernization efforts to reorganize into Brigade Combat Teams. Moreover, the ARFORGEN process was in full operation, so many units were going through RESET as they returned from deployment.[10] During the RESET stage full equipment inventories were required and this is where the Army confirmed that many units did not have all of their allocated equipment.[11]

At the direction of the Chief of Staff of the Army, the DA G4 established a Property Accountability Task Force (PATF) in the fall of 2008 to "develop and execute a

property accountability strategic plan that was to ensure accountability and stewardship of Army-owned equipment and adapt [current] processes to support an expeditionary Army in an era of persistent conflict (as a matter of routine)."[12] The TRADOC Analysis Center at Fort Lee, Virginia, published a technical report entitled Property Accountability Improvement Effort (PAIE) in June of 2009 to support the G4s PATF. This report used a Capabilities Based Assessment approach; it focused on processes, manning, and the associated gaps in each area.[13] The work done by the PAIE found that the force was still not sufficiently accounting for property. Another ALARACT was then released regarding property accountability.

In July 2010, the Chief of Staff of the Army released an ALARACT that initiated a Campaign on Property Accountability.[14] This message sought to increase awareness – indeed to create a sense of urgency – regarding the equipment visibility and property accountability problem. It directed commanders at all levels "to re-establish a culture of supply discipline and property accountability for an ARFORGEN-based Army by accounting for everything (supplies, material and equipment) and reintegrating excess equipment into the supply system to enhance overall Army readiness."[15]

Root Cause and Culture

To gain an appreciation of the property accountability problem, a blog was developed in support of this examination of property accountability to survey the Army logistics community. In general, the blog sought to determine the predominant reasons and potential root causes for the Army's problems with property accountability and excess equipment. The blog was executed under the authority of the Sustainment Knowledge Management Center at Fort Lee, VA. Many of the anecdotal and episodic comments centered on personal experiences and observations. However, most

comments stressed the enforcement of established processes and procedures, the need to update doctrine, problems of inadequate training and manning, and a lack of leadership at all levels to enforce standards.[16]

These observations indicate problems in Army culture with regard to property accountability during this recent period of conflict. Culture refers to "a group of people whose shared beliefs and practices identify the particular place, class, or time to which they belong."[17] It is important to note that this cultural shift is not evident across the entire Army. But the shift reflects contemporary attitudes formed during deployments, combat, and RESET. These circumstances simply reduced the importance of stewardship in Army culture. However, a lack of stewardship is not acceptable given the Army's requirement to be good stewards of tax payer equipment and resources. The American people demand much of their Army. Recent news polls show that Americans have a high approval rating for our nation's military.[18] Americans trust that the military will do what is right and just. As the largest service, the Army has the most equipment to account for.[19] They have high expectations of its Soldiers; specifically, Americans expect our Soldiers to be good stewards of the resources entrusted to them. The most valuable of those resources is America's National Treasure – the military service member. Americans expect that the Army will do all it can to ensure the protection of our Soldiers while in harm's way by obtaining the best equipment possible and inherently accounting for it also.

The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan posed a different sort of enemy on the battlefield. On this asymmetrical battlefield, the omnipresent enemy was not uniformed enemy. This enemy used irregular warfare and evasive tactics. This enemy did not

engage in direct contact; instead this enemy relied on suicide bombers and roadside bombs. Accordingly, commanders began requesting items that would give them the tactical and technical advantage and ensure the protection of their Soldiers. In order to support commander's requests, approvals for equipment purchasing quickly followed. Practically all procured equipment was newly developed and commercial off-the-shelf items. So classifying and accounting for equipment became a difficult task. At the risk of not getting Soldiers what they needed to survive and win, property accountability became an afterthought.[20]

Army Regulation 735-5 and Army Regulation 710-2 are the Army's basic documents relating to equipment visibility and property accountability. These regulations establish process and procedures for accountability. The most basic and critical item in these regulations is the Commander's Supply Discipline Program (CDSP). But CDSP has been circumvented in current conflicts.[21] CSDP is exactly what it implies; a disciplined approach to maintain property accountability. Army senior leaders are well aware that effective property accountability enables the Army to make prudent use of its resources and to support flexible equipping strategies.[22] The task is how to ensure that leaders at all levels understand the basics of effective property accountability.

As a professional organization, the Army prides itself on decentralized decision making and execution. Army doctrine, policy, and regulations are established to provide single source references on how and why procedures are conducted. Then it is expected that Soldiers and leaders will execute tasks in accordance with these established guidelines. However, leaders are also given the latitude to prioritize

competing requirements and make decisions that are in the best interest of the Soldier and the organization, given the situation. Still, it is through decentralized operations that responsibility and risk are managed. To be effective, leaders must be engaged at every level across the spectrum of responsibility. Therein rests a portion of the problem: Army leaders have disengaged from property accountability. This is evidenced by 87% of redeploying units going through RESET do not have accurate property book records.[23] There is no doubt that the Army is now operating in a volatile, uncertain, complex and in some cases uncertain environment. Within the context of the ARFORGEN process, transformation, and now an austere funding environment, Army commanders must execute operations across the vast spectrum of conflict and confrontation. Perhaps this environment has clouded many leaders' decision making and prioritization of responsibilities. The challenge and potential solution to this problem now resides in developing leaders who have the "training and education [to] endow Soldiers and units with adaptability."[24]

Developing adaptable Soldiers, leaders and units to meet the challenges of persistent conflict and to operate in constantly changing environments is what is needed to restore the Army's culture of accountability.[25] The Army cannot risk failure through a lack of professional education, of complacency, or of resistance to carrying out what is required and expected.[26] When we allow our standards to slip, we begin to see trends develop over time and that affect behavior. Only through enforcing policy in a fair, judicious, and consistent manner will the Army be able to restore its culture regarding property visibility and accountability on par with other professional responsibilities. The Army Learning Concept for 2015 describes a holistic and integrated learning

environment that takes trains and educates Soldiers and leaders in an ever changing environment.[27] Learning is the end state; it is the primary purpose for training and educating. The Army's campaign on learning focuses on adaptation to the situation in order to maintain a competitive advantage.[28] Learning is done not only through leveraging technology to understand concepts but also by doing, a hands-on approach. Too often we put student Soldiers in front of computers to learn, property accountability is a hands-on activity. With proper supervision, Soldiers execute required tasks as a matter of routine. Proper work habits are ingrained in performance. Learning is the basic building block that will help change the culture and get the Army back to where it needs to be regarding property visibility and accountability. Learning what to do, when to do it, and how to do it seems simple enough. But in an organization as large as the Army is, with its competing tasks and priorities, that at is no small task! Organizational change requires leadership from the top down.

Leader Engagement

It is inherent in a leader's responsibility to help subordinates do their jobs the best they can and to provide the necessary resources to accomplish their tasks and missions. However, more often than not, leaders do not fully understand precisely what their subordinates' jobs are.[29] Therefore, leaders tend to shy away from the details and technicalities, especially when they do not understand the task and place misguided trust in the subordinates' accomplishment of the property accountability mission. To help shape a property accountability strategic mindset and culture, consider the following critical key tasks or imperatives that are essential in enabling senior leaders to lead, think, and act strategically in an organization. Senior leaders must understand what it means to shape the future of the organization. This shaping can simply be done

8

through their actions and attitudes. Below are four areas or imperatives that will get Army leaders engaged in property accountability:

- Mentor / Develop Leaders

- Embrace Change

- Display Ethical Stewardship

- Shape the Environment/Culture

These imperatives are essential for ensuring that the Army's property accountability message is effectively communicated. They should become part of the senior leader's ethos, ingrained in all that the senior leader does and in how he/she thinks. The core values of teamwork, caring, enthusiasm, and excellence serve as the threads that weave the imperatives into the organization. They enable the organization's senior leaders to serve as agents for a successful future.

Leader development is possibly senior leaders' most critical task in developing subordinates on how to account for property. It provides an opportunity to shape and develop the norms, values, and beliefs of those in the organization who will someday be replacing the current leaders. Investments in our subordinates contribute to the long-term wellbeing of the organization.

During the past decade of persistent conflict, there has been a noticeable erosion of leader development.[30] LTG Robert Cone, Commanding General of Training and Doctrine Command, speaking at the 2011 Maneuver Conference near Fort Benning, Georgia, urged for an increase in mentorship within the Army. He challenged commanders to get engaged.[31] The ARFORGEN model schedules operating forces in a Train, Ready, or Deploy mission state. Because Army units and individual

augmentees have been rotating every 12 to 24 months, leader development has suffered. Commanders have found themselves focusing on deployment or redeployment tasks while also trying to find time for family and quality of life. They have not had enough time to focus on essential leader tasks; rather, they have been forced to focus on preparing Soldiers and equipment for deployment/redeployment. Nevertheless, senior leaders remain responsible for teaching, training, coaching, and mentoring subordinates in all aspects of their duties and responsibilities, specifically proper property accountability.

A method that senior leaders can use to develop and mentor future leaders is through t*ranscendent leadership,* which means the strategic leader leads within and among the levels of self, others, and organization.[32] Transcendent leaders lead from within; they concentrate first on developing their own capabilities. But they also nurture developing leaders within their realm of responsibility. Finally, they make leader development an element of the organizational mission. Personal self-development is a lifelong process, so senior leaders must continually "sharpen the saw" to remain viable in the organization they are leading as the environment changes. Through self-development, senior leaders demonstrate to subordinates that they are continually growing and enhancing their abilities. This example encourages subordinates to maintain their own competitive advantage.

Good senior leaders are highly visible in their operating environment; their openness and accessibility energizes their organizations. They maintain communications with subordinate leaders at least two levels below to ensure that the organizational message is effectively communicated throughout the organization. This

ensures that new ideas, important messages, and critical policy are understood and reinforced in a positive manner. When junior leaders are well informed and personally involved in the organization's development, they support the senior leader's vision. They espouse the norms, values, and beliefs of the organizational culture. Specifically, if commanders and senior leaders are directly and physically engaged in company-level change of command inventories and 10% inventories throughout the year, they are then engaged and setting the example for property management and accountability. Clearly this is hard to do – much less make time for it – but it establishes standards and defines expectations. In the long run saves time, energy, and resources.

<u>Embrace Change</u>

Change will happen. Senior leaders must be able to personally lead change, not just manage it. They are the agents that will make the change a success or failure. Their enthusiasm for the change is a critical factor. Change can be driven by internal or external events or processes. Regardless of the origins of change, members of the organization must understand why it is happening and what positive results it is intended to produce. Senior leaders must lead change by communicating the reasons for it and the advantage that will occur from it.

In *Leading Change,* John Kotter identifies an eight-stage process to effectively guide organizations through change:[33]

1. Establish a Sense of Urgency

2. Creating the Guiding Coalition

3. Developing a Vision and Strategy

4. Communicating the Change Vision

5. Empowering Broad-Based Action

6. Generating Short-Term Wins

7. Consolidating Gains and Producing More Change

8. Anchoring New Approaches in the Culture

This process is best used in sequence. The first four stages are geared towards unfreezing the environment to ensure receptivity to the new idea or model. The next three stages begin to freeze or cement the new methods or practices into the organization. Then the last stage embeds the change into the organizational culture.[34] To get change started, leaders sometimes have to "create a significant emotional event", a triggering event that causes people to be uncomfortable or feel uncertain. This trigger sets change in motion. Then senior leaders must propel that event to the next level to keep the change alive and moving. Empowering subordinate leaders and getting them to focus on the future benefit of the change – not only for themselves but for the greater good of the organization – expands ownership of the change and anchors it in the organization. This layered approach to change increases the likelihood for success. It also reveals a leader's attitude and genuine belief that what he/she is doing is clearly the right thing to do for the greater good of the organization.[35] Many units have a weekly day dedicated to maintenance; it is part of the culture and is predictable. A similar effort should be directed towards property accountability on a habitual interval basis. When the property accountability culture achieves the same level of attention as the maintenance culture in an organization, the change has succeeded.

Display Ethical Stewardship

Stewardship infers to the leader's fair and just oversight of his/her people, resources, and facilities. It also includes the responsibility to do what is predominantly

perceived as ethically right and fair for the greater good of the organization. Good

stewards do not seek personal gain; they are totally selfless and always place others

and the organization first. As demonstrated stewards, senior leaders earn the trust of

their subordinates and their superiors. They are placed in their positions because

someone recognized that they had the potential and character to be entrusted with such

a position. Their challenge is to maintain that trust; they must keep earning interest on it

and sharing it too. By simply trusting others, a senior leader shows that he/she is willing

to share responsibility. Good senior leaders get others involved in becoming

stakeholders in the organization.

However, too often we see that senior leaders do not truly understand their on-

going responsibility to sustain trust; sometimes they become irresponsible in their

actions. Part of earning trust resides in conducting inspections and verifying that what

you have told your subordinates to do is in fact being carried out. Inspections are a

perfect time to offer praise and reward for a job well done – for meeting and exceeding

expectations. Inspections also offer an opportunity to correct behavior and provide

retraining to ensure that expectations and standards are met. Leaders sometimes fail to

realize that they live in a fishbowl; everyone is watching to see how they act and react to

events or to observe what they do or fail to do. Failure to conduct property inspections

after field training exercises or during pre- and post-deployment events sends a

message that our equipment and its condition is not important. Senior leaders must

work hard to build a culture of excellence that fosters trust, that exemplifies ethical

behavior, and that encourages shared responsibility of accountability throughout the

organization.

Shape the Environment / Culture

        The atmosphere of an organization and the dynamics that facilitate its interpersonal and group relationships are at the heart of the organization's culture. Senior leaders are responsible for ensuring that the organizational culture is aligned and with their vision and purpose.[36] To achieve a healthy climate, leaders must communicate constantly and consistently throughout their organization. Their communications shape the methods and actions that reveal the organization's culture. Messaging techniques that inform, involve, ignite, and ultimately invite organizational involvement help to ensure that expectations of the organization are understood.[37] An environment in which the culture is not understood or is not positive can undermine the organization – perhaps destroy it. People seek a measure of certainty in their lives. Effective communications give them purpose and direction, enabling them to develop a connection with the organization which allows for growth and ultimately a sense of belonging.[38] It is through this connection to the organization that the culture is developed and anchored. Healthy organizations, bound by effective strategic communications, are adaptive and receptive to change that can be cemented into the culture.

        Although leader engagement is an important factor for shaping and changing the property accountability culture, analysis of the systems and processes that direct and enable property accountability must be considered

Gaps in Doctrine, Training, Manning

        In the property accountability blog on Army Community Forums, many responders offered opinions on why property accountability was such a growing problem. Lack of up-to-date doctrine, lack of training, and inadequate manning were

among the reoccurring explanations.[39] Again, Army Regulation 735-5 and Army Regulation 710-2 are the basic instruments for the execution of property accountability; they clearly lay out the processes. Updates for these regulations are scheduled to be released in 2012.[40] Critics can easily blame doctrine for the problem. But unless the doctrine is actually read and followed, it is hard to make the claim that the doctrine is flawed. And, doctrine is routinely updated based on developing situations in the field.

Aside from direct leader engagement, the gaps that have truly contributed to the property accountability problem are those in the areas of training and manning during this period of protracted conflict. Below are the unit level findings as cited by the PAIE technical report.

- School-house training does not provide adequate proficiency to perform necessary property accountability procedures in a deployed environment.

- Loss of property accountability resulting from soldiers progressing to higher rank and levels of responsibilities without formal training. (On-the-job training requirements, E1 progresses to E6 with nothing more than AIT training).

- Personnel turnover during pre-deployment and/or re-deployment results in breakdowns in property accountability.

- Quality of property accountability degrades as a result of re-classed 92Y NCOs failing to possess an appropriate level of experience commensurate with their level of responsibilities.

- Current authorizations for 92Y/920A are inadequate to fully support wartime requirements for accurate property accountability.

- Units have varying levels of CSDP emphasis and CDSP fails to take priority against other competing requirements.

- Current delivery methods for property accountability guidance (ALARACTS, et al) do not provide consistent and maintained awareness for current policy.

- When LBE [Left Behind Equipment] is transferred from unit to AMC [Army Material Command], policy and procedures are not always adhered to.

- Excessive requisition lead time and incorrect requisition inputs results in property arriving in theater after the ordering unit has redeployed.

- Procurements outside of the standard military supply system may not be property accounted for in PBUSE [Property Book Unit Supply Enhanced].

- Inaccurate / incomplete property book adjustments of TPF [Total Package Fielding] result from incomplete documentation from fielding teams, inconsistent catalog information, and/or incomplete supply room PBUSE entries. [41]

Given the preponderance of equipment is at the unit level, clearly training and manning the force with the right skills are potential fundamental solutions for problems surrounding of property accountability. But how can the training and manning gaps be closed? The training gap can be attributed to a lack of qualified property book officers (PBOs).[42] PBUSE training teams frequently note a lack of proper training for the PBO's and their staffs. PBOs are considered the subject matter experts in units; but if they are not properly trained and lack initiative as well as leadership, then there will be accountability problems in the unit. Another contributing factor noted by training teams in the field is the lack of what some would consider relics of the "old days": tough

inspections carried out by qualified inspectors.[43] Observers have noted that inspectors

do not have the required knowledge and experience. Uninformed by rigorous

inspections, commanders do not get a true picture of property accountability.[44]

Training has been identified as a problem at the core element of the unit's

property book office. But why? Is it that PBOs are afraid to ask for help because of

pride or fear of revealing their ignorance? Perhaps it is because the standards for

becoming a warrant officer have decreased. Prior to the mid-90s, PBO candidates

needed at least 10 years experience in the supply career field.[45] When the Army

allowed very junior enlisted Soldiers to become PBOs, the Army gave up experience for

longevity. Younger PBOs would stay on the job longer and fill increasing requirements

quicker. Did the Army also sacrifice quality for quantity? The fact is that many newly

appointed PBOs that have never worked in a property book office.[46] It is

understandable that the Army had to make a change in its selection criteria for PBOs

during transformation to the Brigade Combat Teams (BCT) modular construct. The

Army simply needed more PBOs and that came at a cost of experience.

Another training gap opened when the Army was slow in ensuring that its junior

leaders were capable of understanding and executing their property accountability

mission. The Army expects a lot of its junior leaders, so it is critical that they are armed

with all the tools that they need to ensure that they are successful. Schoolhouse

training is required to provide the basics. But in the field at the unit level, mentorship is

the where the real learning happens. Again, engaged leaders make the difference.

Best Practices

We often hear that to be good, you must have a firm grasp of the fundamentals,

the basic components of whatever it is you are trying to master. The same is true with

property accountability in the Army. According to the 2011 Army Posture Statement,

the Army is mandating the "reestablishment of the Command Supply Discipline Program

at all levels, training and mentoring subordinates in supply discipline and property

accountability"[47] This is easy enough to say. But the Army culture regarding property

accountability must change. The good news is that change is happening; progress

toward increased property accountability is underway, according to the G4 PATF

December 2011 update.[48] The ALARACTs of 2005 and 2010 expressed command

emphasis on property management. Battalion and Brigade Commanders are now

mandated to verify and validate that their property is accounted for.[49] These better

practices have been implemented to make a cultural change towards "getting back to

the basics". Battalion and Brigade Commanders who get involved and exercise the

following four simple proven control measures will demonstratively embed Army

standards into a restored Army property accountability culture by:

- Conducting Company-level Change of Command Inventory In-briefs and Out-
  briefs at the Brigade/Battalion Commander level and include unit Property
  Book Officers in the briefs. This communicates to subordinate leaders the
  importance of property accountability and supply discipline.
- Establish and resource a solid Brigade CSDP Program led by your Brigade /
  Battalion Executive Officers who drive staff assistance visits.
- Leverage all available assistance teams (Command Maintenance Evaluation
  & Training (COMET), Command Logistics Review Teams (CLRT) and
  supporting Inspector General teams to help reinforce property accountability
  compliance.

- Get back to the basics of teaching, coaching and mentoring our junior leaders in all aspects of property accountability and the importance of supply discipline. [50]

<u>Recommendations</u>

Based on the research presented, the following four simple recommendations will help get Army property accountability back on track:

- *Fully train those involved in the property accountability mission.* Unless leaders and subordinates alike fully understand not only what it is they are supposed to be doing but how, property accountability it will continue to be a problem. Detailed hands on training will promote a level of understanding that will help get property accountability on track.

- *Man and resource units to account for property.* Getting the right personnel in the right positions in sufficient numbers will greatly assist commanders in accounting for property. Making property accountably and extra duty does not demonstrate that property accountability is a priority. Committing a qualified set of experts at each level of command will help the commander accomplish the property accountably mission.

- *Get leaders engaged in property accountability.* As demonstrated time and time again, organizations with engaged leaders are successful. They are able to lead change and shape the environment to promote learning, ethical behavior and a responsible level of stewardship that ensures success in all areas of the organization.

- *Conduct inspections.* Too often the Army units are under time constraints and power down responsibility for property accountability inspections. Subordinates ask their leaders to trust that they did what they were supposed to do. However, it can be argued that leaders are verifying that trust and can offer reward for a job well done during an inspection. To recognize a job well done while ensuring that property accountability, serviceability, and cleanliness are executed demonstrates that leaders care and that work done is productive and for a purpose.

Conclusion

Property accountability is a manageable task and is essential for mission success. It can clearly be executed with proper training, appropriate manning, and engaged leadership who inspect. Strategically, Army leaders allowed weaken property accountability practices to develop, which led to excess and loss. The Army culture lost its focus on accountability and stewardship. Competing priorities required commanders to make hard choices while executing a war on multiple fronts and transforming the force. The path of least resistance was to assume that "we will account for it later" or "it will be thrown away or destroyed," so we do not need to worry about it. We now know that is not the case. All equipment is important. Poor property accountability jeopardizes readiness.

Restoring property accountability to Army culture requires active engaged leadership. If senior leaders espouse and communicate the core values of teamwork, caring, enthusiasm, and excellence in all that they do, they will be fully prepared to deal with professional challenges. Moreover, leaders must continually develop junior leaders, must embrace change, and must exemplify ethical stewardship, and must

actively shape the environment and culture. These imperatives are at the core of a

senior leader's responsibility and obligation to the organization. These imperatives

must be championed at every opportunity that senior leaders have as they engage the

organization and those outside the organization. Through active communication, senior

leaders give value and meaning to their people, who then share a sense of pride and

accomplishment in service to an excellent organization. Army leaders are mandated to

be responsible officers and trusted stewards of government dollars and resources,

especially in this era of reduced budgets and personnel cuts.

Endnotes

[1] Comment by LTG Donald M. Campbell during a training brief from the 3rd Armored Calvary Regiment Commander during a training brief on or about 28 September 2011 as heard by Mr. Robert Stitt, Chief of Plans, Operations & Equipment Integration, Mission Support Element, G4, Fort Hood, Texas.

[2] The ARFORGEN (Army Force Generation) model provides Combatant Commanders (CCDR) and civil authorities with a steady supply of trained and ready units that are task organized in modular expeditionary force packages and tailored to joint mission requirements. These operational requirements focus the prioritization and synchronization of institutional functions to recruit, organize, man, equip, train, sustain, mobilize, and deploy units on a cyclic basis.

[3] McCoy, William H., Acting, The Inspector General. "United States Army Inspector General Agency Inspection of Reset of Army Equipment." Memorandum for Secretary of the Army. Washington, DC, July 18, 2011. p. 3.

[4] The Chief of Staff of the Army sent a message with the intent of accounting for all Army equipment in both garrison and forward deployed locations. Casey, George W. Jr LTG, U.S. Army Chief of Staff, "EXECUTION ORDER 59-10 (Campaign on Property Accountability)," Pentagon, Washington, DC, Headquarters, Department of the Army, July 7, 2010. p. 2.

[5] The main issue with the issuance of this message is that it was addressed the Army Component Commanders in CENTCOM, PACOM, SOUTHCOM and SOCOM. It was not addressed to FORSCOM or USAREUR where most of the forces were provided from. This could very well be the genesis of much of the property accountability problem. Department of the Army, Message 092238Z May 03. Approval to Implement Wartime Accountability. Washington, DC. May 2003.

[6] Ibid.

[7] McCoy, "United States Army," Enclosure 2, Annex 2, p 2-1.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Department of the Army, Message 160108Z Nov 05. ALARACT 234/2005, Rescind the Limited Wartime Accounting Policy dated 092238Z May 03.

[10] RESET (when viewed in all capital letters) is a phase immediately after redeployment that is designed to systematically restore deployed units to an appropriate level of equipment, Soldier and Family readiness in preparation for future deployments and contingencies. McCoy, William H., Acting The Inspector General. "United States Army Inspector General Agency Inspection of Reset of Army Equipment." Memorandum for Secretary of the Army. Washington, DC, July 18, 2011. p. 1, 3.

[11] Most (29 of 33 or 87%) Active and Reserve units maintained inaccurate property book records, contributing to difficulties in precise planning of field and sustainment level RESET. McCoy, "United States Army." p 3.

[12] Schairbaum, Mark, Free, Eddie LTC; "Property Accountability Improvement Effort – Technical Report," June 1, 2009, Fort Lee, TRAC-L-TR-09-27

[13] Ibid.

[14] Casey, George W. Jr. LTG, U.S. Army Chief of Staff, "ALARACT 210/2010, EXECUTION ORDER 59-10 (Campaign on Property Accountability)," Pentagon, Washington, DC, Headquarters, Department of the Army, July 7, 2010.

[15] Ibid. p. 2.

[16] With the help of the Sustainment Knowledge Management team from the Sustainment Center of Excellence at Fort Lee, VA, I was able to establish a blog that provided a variety of anecdotal and episodic comments. The discussion helped me shape and focus my research. Gonzales, Frank J. Army Community Forums – Perception of Excess Blog https://forums.army.mil/CommunityBrowser.aspx?id=1592878 (created on October 24, 2011)

[17] Culture definition from *Word 2007,* Office Enterprise 2007, Microsoft Corporation.

[18] Americans continue to express greater confidence in the military than in 15 other national institutions, with 78% saying they have a "great deal" or "quite a lot" of confidence in it. Jeffrey M. Jones, "Americans Most Confident in Military, Least in Congress," June 23, 2011, linked from *Gallup Politics* http://www.gallup.com/poll/148163/americans-confident-military-least-congress.aspx (accessed February 7, 2012).

[19] Although the Navy and Air Force have higher dollar amounts of equipment the Army has larger amounts of per items quantities to account for based on the number of locations the Army is based at throughout the world.

[20] The majority of the evidence supporting this claim comes from the Sustainment Knowledge Management blog that was created for this paper.

[21] Updates to these regulations are scheduled for publication in 2012 to eliminate recent practices; they add CSDP checklists (and other tools) to make inventories easier.

[22] The 2011 Army Posture Statement, https://secureweb2.hqda.pentagon.mil/ VDAS_ArmyPostureStatement/2011/information_papers/PostedDocument.asp?id=202 (accessed on December 30, 2011).

[23] McCoy, "United States Army," Enclosure 2, Annex 2, p 2-1.

[24] Fontenot, Gregory, and Kevin Benson. "Transformation? Or Reclamation?" Army 59, no. 3 (March 2009): p.44. ProQuest (accessed on November 29, 2011).

[25] U.S. Department of the Army. *The U.S. Army Learning Concept for 2015.* TRADOC Pamphlet 525-8-2. Fort Monroe, Virginia: Training and Doctrine Command, January 20, 2011. p 9.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Ibid.

[28] Ibid. p i.

[29] Mary Walton, *The Deming Management Method,* (New York, New York: Putnam Publishing Group, 1986), 70.

[30] LTG J. D. Johnson, "Eight Army Command Brief", briefing slides, Carlisle Barracks, PA, U.S. Army War College, October 14, 2011.

[31] *Army Times Online,* October 2011, http://www.armytimes.com/news/2011/10/army-general-presents-his -vision-for-future-warriors-100211/ (accessed on October 4, 2011)

[32] Mary Crossan, Dusya Vera, and Len Nanjad, "Transcendent Leadership: Strategic Leadership in Dynamic Environments," *The Leadership Quarterly* 19: (2008) 569-581.

[33] John P. Kotter, *Leading Change* (Boston, Massachusetts: Harvard Business School Press, 1996), 21.

[34] Ibid., 23.

[35] Ibid., 101-115.

[36] Stephen J Gerras, Ph.D., eds., *Strategic Leadership Primer, 3rd Edition,* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: United States Army War College, 2010), 49.

[37] John Baldoni, *Great Communication Secrets of Great Leaders,* (New York, NY: McGraw-Hill, 2003), 33.

[38] Anthony Robins, *Personal Power – The Rapid Planning Method* (San Diego, CA: Robins Research International, Inc.) Disk 7

[39] Gonzales, Army Community Forums.

[40] Catherine A. Reese, Colonel, DA G4, e-mail on January 6, 2012 stating that updated Army Regulation 735-5 and Army Regulation 710-2 will be release in 2012.

[41] Schairbaum, *Property Accountability Improvement Effort – Technical Report*, 37.

[42] Danny White, CW4 Retired, Logistics Training & Consulting – International, e-mail interview by author, December 14, 2011.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Ibid.

[45] Ibid.

[46] Ibid.

[47] Army 2011Posture Statement, https://secureweb2.hqda.pentagon.mil// VDAS_ArmyPostureStatement/2011/information_papers/ViewDocument.asp?id=202 (accessed on December 30, 2011)

[48] Catherine A. Reese, "Property Accountability Task Force – December 2011," briefing slides with scripted commentary, Washington, DC, DA G4 Pentagon, December 15, 2011.

[49] U.S. Department of the Army, *Inventory Management, Supply Policy Below the National Level*, Army Regulation 710-2 DRAFT (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of the Army, March, 11, 2011), Table B-3.

[50] Department of the Army, G4, CW5 Alexander Brown, "What Every Brigade and Battalion Commander Should Know About Property Accountability," Information Paper for Brigade and Battalion Commanders, Washington, DC, April 23, 2010.